

Xevious

Xevious (ゼビウス Zebiusu)^[1] is a vertically scrolling shooter released by Namco in arcades in December 1982.^[2] It runs on Namco Galaga hardware, and was designed by Masanobu Endō (who later created *The Tower of Druaga*). In North America, the game was manufactured and distributed by Atari, Inc.

With its mix of air and ground targets, *Xevious* set the template for many vertically scrolling shooters that followed it. It was the first video game to use pre-rendered graphics^[3]

In 1983, *Xevious* was one of the first arcade games to have a television commercial in the North American market (along with Sega's *Zaxxon*). Atari promoted the game with the slogan "Are you devious enough to beat Xevious?"^[4]

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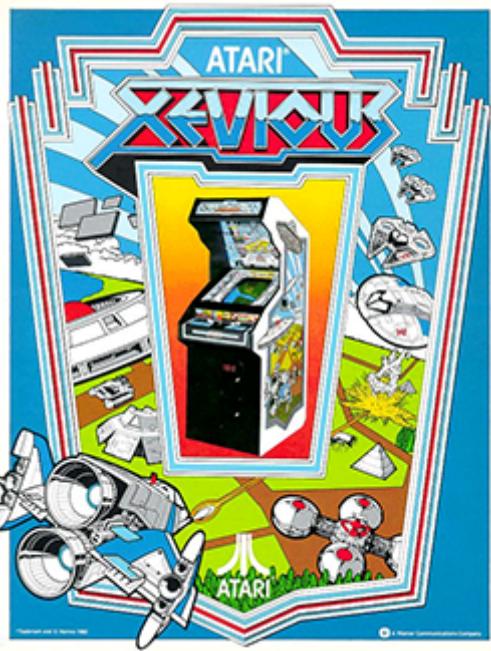
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Gameplay

The player must use an 8-way joystick to pilot a combat aircraft called a Solvalou, which is armed with a forward-firing Zapper for aerial targets and a Blaster which fires an unlimited supply of air-to-surface bombs for ground targets. The game, presumably set in Peru, included forests, airstrips, enemy bases, and mysterious petroglyphs similar to the Nazca Lines.^[5]

There are various aerial enemy aircraft which fire relatively slow-moving bullets at the player, as well as (presumably unpiloted) fast-moving projectiles and exploding black spheres. Ground enemies are a combination of stationary bases and moving vehicles, most of which also fire slow-moving bullets at the player. Giant floating Andor Genesis motherships appear in certain areas; these must be defeated by knocking out their cores, and are considered one of the first level bosses to be incorporated into a video game.^[5]

The game scrolls through 16 areas, looping back to Area 7 after Area 16. The Solvalou continually advances over varying terrain, and the boundaries between areas are marked only by dense forests being flown over. If the player dies, play

Xevious	
 An illustration of an Atari Xevious arcade flyer. It features the game's title 'XEVIOUS' in large, stylized letters at the top, with 'ATARI' above it. Below the title is a central image of an arcade cabinet. The background shows various scenes from the game, including a forest, a pyramid, and floating Andor Genesis motherships. The bottom of the flyer has the word 'ATARI' again and some smaller text.	Arcade flyer
Developer(s)	Namco
Publisher(s)	JP: Namco NA: Atari, Inc. WW: Nintendo (Nintendo 3DS eShop version)
Designer(s)	Masanobu Endō
Composer(s)	Yuriko Keino
Platform(s)	Arcade, Apple II, Atari 7800, Atari ST, NEC PC Engine, NES, MSX, Commodore 64, Amstrad CPC, Sharp X68000, ZX Spectrum
Release	JP: December 1982 NA: January 1983
Genre(s)	Vertically scrolling shooter
Mode(s)	Up to 2 players, alternating turns
Cabinet	Upright
Arcade system	Namco Galaga
CPU	3 × Z80 @ 3.072 MHz
Sound	1x Namco WSG @



The beginning of a regular game of *Xevious*.

will normally resume from the start of the area - but if the player has completed at least 70% of the current area before dying, play will resume from the start of the next area instead.^[5] As the Solvalou continuously flies forward, it is possible to advance without defeating any enemies.

Xevious has hidden bonuses which are not mentioned in the instructions, but can be revealed by performing a secret maneuver. Among these is the "special flag" which first appeared in *Rally-X*. In *Xevious* the flag gives the player an extra life when collected, something carried over to subsequent Namco games.

Ports

Xevious has been ported to the [Atari 7800](#), [NEC PC Engine](#), and [Nintendo Entertainment System](#) (as *Xevious: The Avenger*) game consoles, as well as the [MSX](#), [ZX Spectrum](#), [Commodore 64](#), [Amstrad CPC](#), [Apple II](#), [Sharp X68000](#) and [Atari ST](#) home computers

[Atari 2600](#) and [Atari 5200](#) ports were being developed by [Atari, Inc.](#) in 1984, but were never released.^{[6][7]}

Reception

In 1996, *Next Generation* listed the arcade version at number 90 in their "Top 100 Games of All Time", citing the "intense action", variety of enemies, art direction, level design, and the many possible skill shots.^[3]

In a retrospective review *Digital Press* gave the Atari 7800 port a 9 out of 10 and wrote, "It's every bit as good and challenging as the arcade version, and maybe a bit better because of the difficulty options this version presents you with."^[8]

Legacy

Re-releases

The game has also been included in a number of classic arcade game compilations for consoles and PC, including [Namco Museum Volume 2](#) for the original [PlayStation](#) in 1996, [Microsoft Revenge of Arcade](#) for the [PC](#) in 1998, [Namco Museum 50th Anniversary](#) for the [Xbox](#), [PlayStation 2](#), [Nintendo GameCube](#), and [PC](#) in 2005, [Namco Museum Battle Collection](#) for the [PlayStation Portable](#) in 2005, [Namco Museum DS](#) for the [Nintendo DS](#) in 2007, [Namco Museum Remix](#) for the [Wii](#) in 2007, and [Namco Museum Essentials](#) for the [PlayStation 3](#) in 2009. In 2004, the game was ported to the plug-n-play format as part of the [Ms. Pac-Man TV Game](#) arcade compilation, released by [Jakks Pacific](#).

The NES version of the game was repackaged for Game Boy Advance in 2004 as part of the [Classic NES Series](#) was included as an unlockable bonus game in [Star Fox: Assault](#) in 2005, and was released for the [Virtual Console](#) on January 15, 2007 for the [Wii](#) and May 9, 2013 for the [Wii U](#).^{[9][10]}

In 2005, Namco released the game on the mobile platform for cellphones. It was released on [Xbox Live Arcade](#) on May 23, 2007. In 2006 *Xevious* was released in the [Let's! TV play classic](#) series along with a sequel called *Xevious Scramble Mission* with the same gameplay and engine.

Paired releases with [Super Xevious](#) include [Namco Classic Collection Vol. 1](#), [Namco Museum DS](#) and [Xevious 3D/G+](#) for the original [PlayStation](#).

3.072 MHz, 1x Namco 54XX @ 1.536 MHz
Display Vertical orientation, Raster, 224 x 288

Xevious was included *Pac-Man's Arcade Party* arcade machine in 2010.

3D Classics: *Xevious* is a *Nintendo 3DS* port of this game with 3D effects added to separate all of the objects in the air and everything on ground, and the port takes advantage of the 3DS's whole top screen instead of it being limited to the game's original resolution (with moving clouds added on to the sides), it's available for download on the *Nintendo eShop* for \$5.99. It was released in Japan in June 2011 and in North America, Europe and Australia in July 2011.^[11]

Sequels

- *Super Xevious* (1984) added higher difficulty and a few rarely seen new enemies (including a silver *Galaxian* flagship, a helicopter and a dark yellow tank). Some enemies would also reset the player's score if destroyed.
- *Grobda* (1984) was a spin-off game starring an enemy character — the screw-propelled tank, which is the eponymous "Grobda".
- *Super Xevious: GAMP no Nazo* (1986) was released for the *Family Computer* and the *Nintendo VS. System*. The player must solve riddles in each stage in order to progress. Unless certain criteria are met, the stage loops indefinitely, getting harder and harder in the process.
- *Xevious: Fardraut Saga* (1988) was released for the *MSX2* computers and developed by *Compile*. The player can select between two modes at the title screen, Recon (port of the original *Xevious*) and Scramble, which is a new 16-area game with new enemies and 4 different ships to play with (Solvalou, Solgrado, Zeodalley and Gampmission). In 1990, a similar game was released on the *TurboGrafx-16* as *Xevious: Fardraut Densetsu*.
- *Solvalou* (1991) presented the game with a first-person view and used 3-D flat shaded polygon graphics.
- *Xevious 3D/G* (1995) was an update of the original, which used 3-D texture mapped polygon graphics and a simultaneous two-player feature (the second player got to control a red-lined version of the Solvalou). Ported to the *Sony PlayStation* as *Xevious 3D/G+*.
- *Xevious Arrangement* (1995) was released as part of the *Namco Classic Collection Vol. 1* compilation arcade title (along with the original *Xevious* and *Super Xevious*). The arranged version of the game had improved music and graphics, and different levels.
- *Xevious: Scramble Mission* (2006) was developed by *Namco* and released by *Bandai* as part of the *Let's! TV Play Classic* compilation title, along with *Mappy*, the original *Xevious* and another exclusive game called *Mappy: Revenge of Nyamco*. The game reuses the graphics and engine of the original *Xevious* in a new mission where the Solvalou must navigate a fortress while being timed and destroy a new version of Gamp.
- *Xevious Resurrection* (2009) was released as part of the *PlayStation 3* downloadable title *Namco Museum Essentials* (*Namco Museum* commin Japan).
- An RTS game titled *New Space Order* was in production by *Namco Bandai Games* for the *System N2* arcade system board, but was cancelled.^[12]

Other media

Musician *Haruomi Hosono* (*Yellow Magic Orchestra*) produced an album of music from *Namco* video-games, with *Xevious* as its centerpiece. A follow-up 12" single featured in its liner notes an entire science-fiction short story by Endō, set in the world of *Xevious*, with even a rudimentary fictional language. The theme music from *Xevious* was later used during "Hotline" segments of the video arcade game-based television game show *Starcade*.^[4]

According to *Namco Museum DS*, a three-part novel was written about *Xevious* entitled "Fardraut". However, not much is known about the book, implying that it was never even released. According to the game, some backgrounds, characters, events and even sounds were inspired by the book.

Xevious was one of the video games based for a manga titled *Famicom Rock* published by Comic Coro Coro from 1985 to 1987.

An anime adaption of the game, called *New Space Order: Link of Life*, was released in February 2008.

In the TV show *Kamen Rider Ex-Aid* Kamen Rider Snipe uses a Gashat named *Xevious* based on the game.

References

1. Pronounced /'zəviəs/ *ZEV-ee-əs* according to the Japanese (katakana) spelling /'zi:viəs/ *ZEE-vee-əs* per television

advertising by the American licensor where it was rhymed with "devious".

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3. "Top 100 Games of All Time". *Next Generation* No. 21. *Imagine Media* September 1996. p. 39.
4. "*Xevious*" (http://www.arcade-museum.com/game_detail.php?game_id=10505) *The International Arcade Museum* Retrieved 2012-11-20.
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7. Reichert, Matt. "*Xevious (Atari 5200)*" (<http://www.atariprotos.com/5200/software/xevious/xevious.htm>) *AtariProtos.com*. Retrieved September 19, 2014.
8. Consolazio, Bruce. "*Xevious 7800*" (http://www.digitpress.com/reviews/xevious_7800.htm). *Digital Press Online*
9. <https://www.nintendo.com/games/detail/HxpU2C382Eqp7I7NZ0IAJPomB\KSnRS>
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11. "3D Classics: Xevious Release Information for 3DS" (<http://www.gamefaqs.com/3ds/632673-3d-classics-xevious/data>). *GameFAQs*. CBS Interactive. Retrieved 26 January 2014.
12. <http://arcadeheroes.com/2012/01/04/namco-updates-ugsf-special-site-with-new-space-order-details/>

External links

- [Xevious at the Killer List of Videogames](#)
 - [Xevious at the Arcade History database](#)
 - [Xevious at SpectrumComputing.co.uk](#)
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